

Law Student Opportunities

Criminal Law Division

Correctional Writs and Appeals Section

San Francisco



The Correctional Writs and Appeals section (CWA) is part of the Criminal Division of the Attorney General's Office. A Deputy Attorney General (DAG) in CWA represents the State when prisoners or parolees file petitions for writs of habeas corpus challenging the conditions of their confinement or the length of their conviction. Although the opposing party is a criminal, CWA DAGs do not practice criminal law; rather, constitutional law is the basis of a CWA DAG's practice. The majority of habeas petitions that CWA DAGs handle involve prisoners sentenced to life with the possibility of parole who were denied parole at their parole consideration hearing. Parole denials involve highly evolving law, as evidenced by four California Supreme Court decisions in the last nine years addressing the issue: *In re Rosenkrantz*, 29 Cal. 4th 616 (2002), *In re Dannenberg*, 34 Cal. 4th 1061 (2005), *In re Lawrence*, 44 Cal. 4th 1181 (2008), *In re Shaputis*, 44 Cal. 4th 1241 (2008), *In re Prather*, 50 Cal. 4th 238 (2010), and *In re Shaputis*, No. S188655, 2011 WL 6821364 (Cal. Dec. 29, 2011).

CWA DAGs handle many other miscellaneous issues, such as a prisoner's challenge to a finding that he was guilty of a disciplinary violation in prison, or a parolee's challenge to a finding that he violated his conditions of parole. The proper respondent in a habeas action is the person in charge of the prisoner or parolee's custody, such as the warden or the Secretary of the California Department of Corrections and Rehabilitation, respectively. Within that representation, however, CWA DAGs defend the actions of prison staff, parole agents, the Board of Parole Hearings, and the Governor. CWA DAGs handle cases brought in all levels of State and federal court, and utilize both the Bluebook and the California Style Manual.

Under the direction of the CWA Summer intern coordinator, Summer interns typically work with DAGs on research, writing, and fact investigation in preparing responses to habeas petitions or in preparation for an evidentiary hearing. While clerking, students typically have the opportunity to participate in a wide range of activities, including attending oral argument and visiting San Quentin State Prison. Some former Summer law interns have later been hired to permanent positions within the Office of the Attorney General.

Our San Francisco office is located in the Civic Center in downtown San Francisco. CWA interns must work a minimum of 32 hours a week, and the positions are generally unpaid.

How to Apply:

Between February 1 and March 16, 2012, please mail a resume, cover letter, writing sample (not to exceed six pages), and an unofficial transcript to:

Denise A. Yates, Deputy Attorney General
Correctional Writs and Appeals Section
Office of the Attorney General
455 Golden Gate Avenue, Suite 11000
San Francisco, CA 94102

Or e-mail the same to: Denise.Yates@doj.ca.gov